



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Utah Supreme Court Justice Named William H. Rehnquist Award Recipient

**Williamsburg, VA** (Sept. 4, 2007) – Chief Justice of the Utah Supreme Court Christine M. Durham has been named recipient of the 2007 William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence by the National Center for State Courts. One of the most prestigious judicial honors in the country, the Rehnquist Award is presented annually to a state court judge who exemplifies the highest level of judicial excellence, integrity, fairness, and professional ethics. Chief Justice of the United States John G. Roberts will present the award to Chief Justice Durham at a ceremony Nov. 15 in Washington, D.C.

"Chief Justice Durham has demonstrated her commitment to public service, judicial education, and the cause of justice throughout her 25 years on the Utah Supreme Court. She reflects those qualities that Chief Justice Rehnquist valued during his distinguished career," said Chief Justice Roberts.

NCSC President Mary C. McQueen said the nominating committee selected Chief Justice Durham because of her "innovative leadership style and her contributions to advancing judicial branch education not only in Utah, but nationally." She is noted for developing interactive education programs in content areas that until then did not have curriculum, such as domestic violence, child witness testimony, and scientific evidence.

In the 1980s judicial education was rare. "There was little interest or understanding about the profession of adult education and how it could benefit the practice of judicial education. Christine Durham was the major force which changed this landscape," according to a nomination letter written by Utah State Court Administrator Daniel Becker and Director of Utah's Judicial Institute Diane Cowdrey.

Chief Justice Durham was selected to serve on the Utah Supreme Court in 1982 and was named Chief Justice in 2002. Prior to joining Utah's highest court, Chief Justice Durham served as a District Court judge, was an adjunct professor at Brigham Young University's School of Law, and worked in private practice. Her influence is far-reaching. She was a founding member of the National Association of Women Judges, serving as the organization's president from 1986-1997; she has served on the Board of Directors of the American Judicature Society; serves on the Council of the American Law Institute; she was a co-founder of the Leadership Institute for Judicial Education, located at Memphis University; and she currently serves on the ABA's Council for Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar. Chief Justice Durham graduated from Duke University School of Law in 1971, and currently serves on the University's Board of Trustees. She completed her undergraduate degree at Wellesley College.

The National Center for State Courts is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the administration of justice by providing leadership and service to the state courts. The National Center, founded in 1971 with the encouragement of Chief Justice of the United States Warren E. Burger, provides leadership, research, consulting, education, and training to the state courts. The National Center headquarters are in Williamsburg, Va., with other offices in Arlington, Va., and Denver, Co.

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